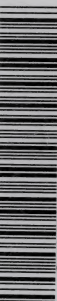


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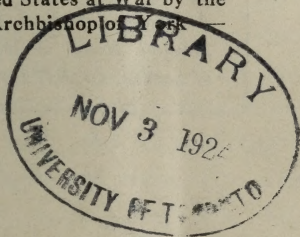


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HANDS ACROSS THE ATLANTIC

Personal Impressions of the
United States at War by the
— Archbishop of York —



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*An Address delivered by the
Archbishop of York at the
Mansion House of the City
of London, on July 19, 1918.*

HANDS ACROSS THE ATLANTIC.

THE war has brought to us anxiety, sorrow, and sacrifice, but it has also brought many blessings. It has brought to us a new unity enduring beneath the surface of minor discords, a new revelation of the capacities of heroism and steadfastness in the hearts of our people, a new outlook upon the meaning and worth of our common life. Last, and not least, it has brought to us a new fellowship and friendship with the United States of America. The hands of these two English-speaking nations reach across the Atlantic and meet in the grasp of a new covenant of faith and comradeship of service. The entry of America into the great struggle is certainly one of the great events of history. It may prove to be the decisive

event of the war. Beyond question, as we enter the fifth year of this tremendous struggle, it is in the West across the ocean that the light of hope and confidence is most clearly shining. As one who has just visited that great country, and has had unique opportunities of speaking to many of its leading men and multitudes of its citizens, I feel it to be a duty to tell my fellow-countrymen something of the mind and spirit and will with which the United States are sending their immense resources across the sea. I hope that you will acquit me of any charge of egotism if I dwell specially upon my own impressions and experiences. After all, it is this and this only which entitles me to claim to give first-hand testimony.

VISITING THE GREAT CITIES.

I had the opportunity of visiting thirteen great cities of the United States—Washington, New York, Boston, Philadelphia, Chicago,

Providence, New Haven, Pittsburg, Cincinnati, Baltimore, Harrisburg, Cleveland, St. Louis. I had the honour of addressing six of the great universities and of spending two days in two of the great training stations both of the Army and the Navy. In each of these great cities, there were almost always two leading gatherings—one of the Chambers of Commerce, comprising companies of from 500 to 1,200 business and professional men, the other great mass meetings of the citizens, ranging in numbers from 2,000 to 6,000. Although my hosts were the Episcopal Church of America, they left the arrangements in each city to citizen committees. I think that it was an advantage to be unconnected with any official propaganda or any political party; it enabled me to speak freely as a plain citizen of this country to the plain citizens of the United States. Yet there was something, undoubtedly, that appealed to the quick imagination of the American people in the

fact that this message, which tried to tell them something of the efforts and struggles that we have put into this cause and of the great moral and spiritual issues involved in it, should have been spoken by one who held an office older than the Crown of a united England.

Certainly it was a strenuous time ; it was not easy within forty days to compass those vast distances and deliver eighty-five speeches to more than 100,000 people. But the whole of that difficult programme was carried through without a single hitch, without a single meeting being a failure. If there was any success, it was due entirely to the fact that I happened to be there when a great tide of enthusiasm was flowing through the people of the United States and they were eager to pay a tribute of gratitude and friendship to this country. Let me, then, on the basis of these experiences, try to describe something of the enthusiasm, unity, determination,

and conviction of the people of the United States.

“FROM NOW ON.”

First of all, their *enthusiasm*. I have never felt carried along by a stream of enthusiasm more spontaneous and more strong. Of course, we must remember that they have what we have not—an appetite for listening to speeches. Their emotions are quick and ready. They love demonstrating for its own sake. But, making allowance for these amiable qualities, it was no ordinary emotion that induced thousands of busy people in these great centres of commerce and industry to leave their business at any hour of the day, and to crowd in their thousands to halls, and theatres, and opera houses. Certainly, I have never, even in the first days of the war in our own country, felt in the same degree a great force of sentiment inspiring the heart of a whole people. It was impossible not to

be impressed by the feeling that here a people, who for half a century have rejoiced in a freedom that has given them an opportunity for private enterprise, were discovering that this freedom was a thing that demanded sacrifice, and were rising as one body eager to make that sacrifice for the common weal. At first, possibly because of the contrast of the atmosphere at home with the atmosphere across the sea, I felt as if the war were largely a great and stirring excitement. It was difficult to adjust one's mind to a state of sentiment with which we were familiar three years ago. But even during the two short months, largely owing to the remarkable influence of the great battle which began on March 21st, and which made America realise what the British Army was doing, there came in to these multitudes of citizens a new note of seriousness, almost of solemnity, and of readiness for sacrifice. It was, I think, Mr. Page, the American Ambassador, who used a char-

acteristic American story to describe the spirit of his people about the war. There were two negroes who had just undergone sentence at the police court, and, as they were being carried away in the carriage placed at their disposal by the Government of the United States, one said to the other: "How long are you in for?" He replied: "A year! How long are you in for?" The other negro scratched his head and said: "I guess it is *from now on.*" These three words describe the spirit of the United States more tersely than any others. They are in this war and with their Allies *from now on.*

MANIFESTATIONS OF UNITY.

Secondly, let me say a word about the *unity* of the United States. Remember that each of these forty-eight States has its own history, character, and tradition. The temperaments of the East, the West, the South, and the Middle West are extraordinarily differ-

ent. Moreover, remember the composite character of the great Republic. It contains every variety of nationality, and yet everywhere the evidence of unity in the cause of the war is the same. After being allowed the privilege of opening the United States Senate with prayer, I met scores of Senators on the floor of the House from all parts of the Republic, and one and all hastened to assure me that the heart and soul of the people of their States were at one with us. There was a time, I think, when the position of labour was very doubtful. Two things made a great impression upon it. One was the revolution in Russia; the other was the way in which the craft and force of the Germans had enabled them to exploit that unhappy country. But I was assured by Mr. Gompers, that doughty champion of the cause of labour, that in every part of the United States working men were giving a steady support to the President and to the war. I cannot better

describe the spirit and attitude of American labour than by quoting some words from the *United Mine Workers' Journal* of April 7th. "Miners of America," it said, "have pledged themselves with full knowledge of all it means, to back the Government in fighting the war through to the bitter end. . . . The distance we are removed from the theatre of war and our two and a half years of neutrality have served to give us a reasonably fair perspective; and the miners of our country in their national and district conventions, in emphatic terms and without a dissenting voice that we know of, have signified their intention to place all they have behind the striking arm of America."

THE IRISH AMERICANS.

This unity is the more remarkable because of the extraordinary variety of the composition of the citizenship of the United States of which I have spoken. The Republic has

thrown open its doors with large hospitality to men of every nation under the sun, trusting to the spirit of American institutions to assimilate and unite them. In 1910, leaving out the population which is simply of foreign extraction, there were in the United States 13½ millions registered as of foreign birth—2½ million Germans, more than 1½ million Austro-Hungarians, and 1,352,000 Irish. Alas, many of the Irish are most bitter against this country. But I am satisfied by inquiry that the great bulk of the genuine Irish-Americans are whole-heartedly supporting the President. It was an Irish Nationalist Mayor who asked the citizens of his city in the Middle West to observe a public holiday on the afternoon of my visit, and he delivered one of the most passionate speeches that I ever heard about the justice of our cause. Boston, as many of you know—the home of American culture—is now largely an Irish city. The centre of it is the Faneuil Hall, “the cradle

of liberty," and whenever meetings are held there every citizen has a right to attend. It was feared that so many Irish would be present that it might not be desirable that the meeting should be held; but it was held, and I only had to begin by saying that I had stood on the spot where William Redmond laid down his life for his country to feel that I had the Irish heart with me, and I cannot remember a single meeting in the United States that was more full of generous enthusiasm.

This unity of the people has a bearing on the vexed question as to whether or not it would have been possible for the United States to have entered this war at an earlier stage. That is a question for Americans to decide. We can never withhold our full sympathy from the men and women who, from the earliest days, were passionately anxious that the United States should throw in their lot with the Allies. But it may be allowed to a purely dispassionate observer

to believe that it is very doubtful whether at any earlier stage the whole people could have been rallied to the cause. Certainly, the passing of the Draft Law with practical unanimity, and the ease, nay, the enthusiasm, with which the recruiting was carried on, remain two of the most remarkable achievements of the statesmanship of our time. The fact that, when he chose to strike, the President was able to strike with the whole force of a united people is a great tribute to his patience and to his strength.

KEENNESS AND DETERMINATION.

Thirdly, let me say a word about the *determination* of the United States to throw all their resources without stint into this struggle. I am not going to dwell upon the delays and disappointments that at first hindered the fulfilment of their desires. If I do not speak of them, it is not because I do not know of them. But I do not dwell upon

them because I think it would be ungenerous. In all conscience, we have made enough mistakes ourselves. We have to remember that there are forty-eight States in the American Republic through which the Government has to be carried on. There was no strong centralised civil administration at Washington. It was extraordinarily difficult suddenly to divert private enterprise, conducted with exceptional energy and push, into national service. We must remember the necessity in the United States for publicity, which always means that programme runs ahead of performance. We must make every allowance for a young, proud, and powerful people who desired to make their own contribution to the equipment of their own army ; that accounts for many delays in regard to the production of rifles, guns, aeroplanes, and ships. In the second place, it is not only ungenerous to dwell upon these disappointments but it is unnecessary, for they are felt

far more keenly by the people of the United States themselves. They are whetting and stimulating their determination now to make good every promise they have made. Since the spring there has passed over the United States a movement of almost passionate energy, and you may take it that the days of large plans are now giving way to the days of resolute performance.

THE SHIPBUILDING PROGRAMME.

I was allowed to pay a day's visit to Hog Island, near Philadelphia, which will prove, I believe, to be the largest shipbuilding yard in the world. It would have been easy to lay down a few slipways; instead, they conceived a great scheme, a great yard, with fifty slipways, where fifty ships could be built simultaneously. In October, the land was barren waste; in winter, the land—frozen solid—had to be broken up. Now that immense apparatus has got into work,

and provision is made for building and fitting standard ships of 7,500 tons and 8,000 tons in eighty-one days, while arrangements are being rapidly carried out so that, in that great shipbuilding yard, it will be possible to build 200 ships a year.

THE SUPPLY OF MEN.

As to the supply of men, it is wonderful that the United States should have raised the personnel of their Navy to nearly half a million. When I was inspecting the great naval station on Lake Michigan, more than one thousand miles from the ocean, I spoke to five thousand of these young recruits for the Navy—strong, sinewy, country lads from Texas and Ohio and the Middle West. Trained by the famous Sousa, the director of their military bands, they passed in front of me singing, in a way that went to my heart, the words of "Over There."

"We'll be there, we're coming there,

And we won't be back till it's over, over there."

I have never seen anything so magnificent in my life as the bearing and physique of those young sailors, most of whom had never seen the sea.

We know something now of the strength and spirit of the American Army. There are already over a million of these men in France, and there are nine millions of the same type held in reserve across the sea. It is most satisfactory that we have been able to send so many of our ships to bring these men across the ocean. When the great *Vaterland* was launched in Germany, the chairman of the company said genially to a United States officer: "How many troops do you think I can put on board?" "I do not know," was the reply. Then the answer came from the chairman: "Ten thousand! And some day I may bring them across the sea to the United States." "Well," the naval officer said, "if you do, I hope I shall be there to meet them." Within a very short time that

same naval officer put ten thousand American troops in the *Vaterland* and sent them across the sea to fight the Germans. The truth of that striking story was confirmed to me by the naval officer in question.

THE RAW MATERIAL AND THE FINISHED ARTICLE.

I saw officers and men at very close quarters. I spent a day and a night in the great training camp on Long Island. I saw the raw material—a strange and motley spectacle—lads of every nationality, some so unaccustomed to any kind of physical exercise that sometimes, when some of them were put on a table three feet high, they felt it would be certain death if they were to leap off. Yet when I saw the finished article, a regiment paraded ready for France by the General, it was a most stimulating sight. The officers and men of that regiment were my shipmates across the sea for fourteen days, and during

the voyage I had an opportunity of seeing and knowing something of the spirit that animates them. The officers were men of the keenest intelligence. Seventy-five per cent. were University graduates. Of the men, sixty per cent. were foreign born ; and it is indeed amazing—incredible to us who have a problem so entirely different to deal with—to realise that you have in these armies hosts of German-born Americans who are only too eager to have their chance of repudiating the policy which controls the country of their origin and of going across the sea to fight it. I asked a young German-American corporal what his feelings would be when he found himself in the throes of battle with his own kith and kin, and he replied, “I have heard that things happen when Greek meets Greek, but they are nothing to what will happen when German meets German.” It is not only a new army, it is a new nation, that is being made. I found almost no trace

of boasting. In an excellent speech which I overheard on board, a non-commissioned officer said to his platoon: "Men, I have something to say to you this morning. We are getting near land. You think you can fight; you cannot. I know that because I have tried to teach you for six months. We are coming near to the men who can. They are your British and French comrades. They will teach you. You have got to learn from them; mind you do it. Dismiss!"

CHATEAU THIERRY AND VAUX.

Now we know something of the fighting qualities which that army is displaying. We are as proud as they are of all they have done, of the deeds which will be associated in history with the names of Chateau Thierry and Vaux. I shall never be able to describe what it meant to an Englishman to stand before those great multitudes across the sea, when our men were withstanding the

onslaughts of the enemy, and to remind them that English soldiers were dying for America. Remember, now, that American soldiers are dying for England. I cannot but pay a tribute of sympathy to Ex-President Roosevelt, one of whose sons has given the supreme proof of his devotion. Such a death touches the heart of England as deeply as it will touch the heart of the United States.

I cannot express the determination of the United States in truer and more forcible words than those spoken to me by Mr. Elihu Root, who said: "My Lord, please tell your people when you return that the one hundred millions of America are not weaklings. They are awake at last. They were slow to part with their peace, but they are awake at last, and they are preparing to fight, going to fight, beginning to fight, and will continue to fight, with all the dogged persistency, the bull-dog courage, the incapacity to realise defeat, the unwillingness

to realise defeat, and therefore the capacity for victory which we rightly inherit from the men who have made the liberty of the Anglo-Saxon race."

THE CAUSE OF FREEDOM.

Lastly, may I say a word about the *conviction* of the United States. The ideals to which the President has given such noble and elevated expression have sunk deep into the mind and conscience of his people. You have to be in the United States to realise the truth that nothing could have compelled a nation which has no treaty obligations to honour, no purpose of its own to serve, no immediate danger to repel, a nation trained as no other nation has ever been to reverence the principles of peace — nothing could have compelled such a nation to throw itself into the war except a profound conviction that the cause of the freedom and civilisation of the world was at stake. Time

after time, in these great companies of citizens and, not least, in the Chambers of Commerce, where business and professional men were assembled, there was a most moving and immediate response to any presentment of the great moral and spiritual issues which lie behind this war.

Most of us, in the long strain of the war, have been anxious to be assured that, behind the high words we use, there is reality. I do not think I ever had so striking an impression of the solemn reality that lies behind these claims than when I was speaking to the President of the United States. Here was a man, recognising in all the tissues of his being that he was bound to seek peace and ensue it, hating war and all that it means, and yet driven to the tremendous responsibility of summoning that great peace-loving people to abandon its traditions and throw itself into the war, because he felt that he was bound by loyalty to a higher ideal than peace

itself—the defence of truth and justice against falsehood and wrong. Here I will express the deepest conviction of the people of the United States by quoting from the speech to which I have already referred. “This war,” said Mr. Elihu Root, “is not a war about boundaries or provinces or the distribution of territory ; it is not a war in which we are entering because ships are sunk or because plots have been laid and carried on within our boundaries, or because attempts have been made to foment attacks and partition our territory ; it is not a war for Serbia, or Alsace-Lorraine, or Poland, or even for Belgium—it is a war between Odin and Christ.”

MORAL FORCE BEHIND ARMED FORCE.

It is a great and solemn reality that has sent that great peace-loving people into war. Two conclusions seem to follow. One is that it is a moral and religious duty to

stand steadfast until issues so vast are settled once and for all. The other is that, when so much is at stake, behind armed force there must be moral force—the force of two nations making a sustained and serious effort to raise their moral and spiritual life up to the level of the high claims which they make. There were no words more frequently on my lips in the United States than these noble words of the President: “A supreme moment of history has come. The eyes of the people have been opened, and they see. The hand of God is upon the nations. He will show them favour I devoutly believe only if they rise to the clear heights of His justice and mercy.”

It is plain beyond all question that the covenant of friendship between these two great nations, now being sealed by the blood of their best and bravest men, means an epoch-making event in the history of the world and a new hope for the permanent

peace of mankind. My whole-hearted testimony is that we have with us and behind us the zeal, the resolution, and the conviction of the President and people of the United States of America.

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